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Letter dated 17 August 2018 from the representatives of Liechtenstein and Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

We have the honour to forward herewith a joint letter dated 17 August 2018 by Aurelia Frick, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Justice and Culture of the Principality of Liechtenstein, and Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, concerning violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in connection with the recent reports of official death notices of a large number of arbitrarily detained civilians, including political detainees and others perceived to oppose the authorities in the Syrian Arab Republic (see annex).

We would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated to the members of the General Assembly and the Security Council and issued as a document of the Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Council.

(*Signed*) Georg **Sparber**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed S. **Al-Thani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 17 August 2018 from the representatives of Liechtenstein and Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

We have the honour to write to you on behalf of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America as well as our own Governments.

We write to you to express alarm and deep concern at recent reports of the emergence of large numbers of death notices issued by the Syrian authorities that document the death of arbitrarily detained civilians, including political detainees and others perceived to oppose the authorities, who were subject to enforced disappearances since the start of the uprising.

According to Syrian and international human rights groups, death notices are being issued at an unprecedented rate for large numbers of detainees who have perished since March 2011. These documents are being issued by the civil registry offices upon receiving from the Syrian Defence Ministry lists of names of deceased detainees and by the military police, which releases death certificates listing medical causes for the deceased, such as heart attacks or strokes. The documents routinely fail to explain the circumstances of the enforced disappearance and death of the detainee. According to Syrian and international human rights groups, thousands of detainees have died under torture, due to deteriorating humanitarian conditions, or were extrajudicially executed. Often, individuals who were arrested together have the same death date, which may indicate systematic executions.

The families of detainees forcibly disappeared by the Syrian authorities have been unable to ascertain the fate of their loved ones for years. Recently, many families were shocked to learn from Syrian authorities that their relatives have been officially recorded as dead. These families are unable to announce the news of the detainees' deaths and to arrange funeral services for fear of retribution by the security services. In addition, families have often not received the body of the deceased, nor have they been informed about the location of the body or the circumstances and cause of death. The Syrian authorities should identify and return the bodies to their respective families.

Recent disclosures may corroborate the 2013 report known as the "Caesar report", which is based on evidence smuggled by a defector, including more than 53,000 pictures which document the execution of thousands of detainees. According to international human rights organizations, 6,786 unique victims were identified in those pictures.[1] These recent disclosures may also corroborate findings of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which stated in one of its reports that detainees have been beaten to death, died as a result of injuries sustained due to torture, or perished as a consequence of inhumane living conditions, amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity, including those involving extermination, murder, torture, imprisonment, enforced disappearance and other inhumane acts.[2]

[1] See https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/12/16/if-dead-could-speak/mass-deaths-and-torture-syrias-detention-facilities.

[2] See A/HRC/31/CRP.1.

These acts constitute flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and further violate basic rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which the Syrian Arab Republic is a State party, imposes additional obligations on the authorities to refrain from such conduct.

The increased rate of official death notices reflects a policy geared towards impunity by the Syrian authorities without fear of legal consequences, and may amount to tacit admission of responsibility for the deaths of the detainees. As noted by the Commission of Inquiry, incidents of this nature and at this scale have amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity[3] and further demonstrate the need for comprehensive investigation and accountability under international law. Yet, the Syrian authorities demonstrate no intent or ability to launch legitimate investigations or criminal prosecutions against those allegedly responsible for these crimes, but rather protect them and legalize their actions with procedures of the sort described herein. Such actions further demonstrate the need for the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, which was established by General Assembly resolution 71/248.

Achieving accountability for mass atrocity crimes is essential for creating the conditions conducive to sustainable peace in the Syrian Arab Republic, through the United Nations-led efforts. Arbitrary detention and torture are in violation of international law and in defiance of various Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2254 (2015), and must be addressed within the framework of the United Nations-led process. We also reiterate the call by the Security Council to release any arbitrarily detained persons.

We urge the Security Council and the General Assembly to take necessary steps to fully investigate all possible atrocities and hold those responsible for these serious atrocities to account and safeguard the lives, freedom and human rights of the Syrian people.

(*Signed*) Aurelia **Frick**
Minister for Foreign Affairs, Justice and Culture
of the Principality of Liechtenstein

(*Signed*) Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim **Al-Thani**
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the State of Qatar

[3] Ibid.

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Security Council
Seventy-third year

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations:

Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

* A/73/150.

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Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Central European Initiative

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States

Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration

Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations remains essential to maintaining international peace and security, upholding human rights and achieving sustainable development. The present consolidated report, prepared in accordance with paragraph 4 (l) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 58/316, responds to a number of Assembly resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. The report is also being submitted to the Security Council, pursuant to Council resolution 1809 (2008) and the presidential statement of 6 August 2013 (S/PRST/2013/12). It covers the

period since the issuance of the previous report on 15 July 2016 (A/71/160-S/2016/621).

The activities and achievements described herein demonstrate the enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations in many areas of mutual interest, including through regular consultations and coordinated actions at both the strategic and operational levels. As observed in the report, there are still opportunities for even closer cooperation, in particular in the field.

The United Nations will continue to deepen existing cooperation arrangements and explore opportunities to create new ones, as appropriate, with relevant regional and other organizations to better advance the vision set out in the Charter of the United Nations, in the interest of the peoples our organizations are collectively mandated to serve.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is being submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and specific regional and other organizations, adopted at the seventy-first and seventy-second sessions of the Assembly, in which it requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of those resolutions during the seventy-third session.

2. The Security Council, in its resolution 1809 (2008), requested the Secretary-General to include, in his regular reporting to the Council, assessments of progress on the cooperation between the United Nations and relevant regional organizations. Furthermore, in its presidential statement of 6 August 2013 (S/PRST/2013/12), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General, in his next biennial report to the Council and the General Assembly on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations, to include recommendations on ways to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and relevant regional and subregional organizations and arrangements. The present report is, therefore, also being submitted to the Security Council.

3. The present consolidated report, prepared in accordance with paragraph 4 (l) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 58/316, covers the period since the issuance of the previous such report on 15 July 2016 (A/71/160-S/2016/621). It describes some of the main activities and achievements in implementing the relevant General Assembly resolutions and highlights areas for enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. In a world in which the challenges we face are complex, multidimensional and unpredictable, multilateral collaboration, or "network multilateralism", across our organizations takes on renewed importance and offers a range of opportunities.

II. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

African Union

4. Reflecting the high priority placed by both organizations on their relationship, the United Nations and the African Union have enhanced their collaboration on numerous fronts, including through more regular exchanges of information, consultations and coordinated action. The first United Nations-African Union Annual Conference, a consultative mechanism convening the heads of the respective secretariats, was held on 19 April 2017 at United Nations Headquarters, in New York. The second Annual Conference was held on 9 July 2018 at the headquarters of the African Union, in Addis Ababa. In addition, I attended the twenty-eighth and thirtieth ordinary sessions of the African Union Assembly, held in Addis Ababa in January 2017 and January 2018, respectively, while the Deputy Secretary-General attended the twenty-ninth and thirty-first sessions, held in July 2017 in Addis Ababa and in July 2018 in Nouakchott, respectively. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission also participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations, a biennial consultation on key strategic issues in the realm of peace and security, which was held in June 2018 in New York.

5. The Chairperson and I have prioritized the development of a systemic and strategic partnership that is based on the principles of mutual respect and solidarity, having signed and started the implementation of two framework agreements to further institutionalize and strengthen cooperation: the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, signed in April 2017;

and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, signed in January 2018. Those frameworks aim at fostering stronger cooperation and coordination between our organizations.

6. In the context of United Nations support for the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017–2027, the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa has reinforced its advocacy and policy advisory activities at the global level to mobilize support for Africa's strategic priorities. In October 2017, during the annual Africa Week, the United Nations system partnered with African regional and subregional organizations to hold a series of high-level advocacy events on the theme "Supporting an integrated, prosperous, people-centred and peaceful Africa: Towards the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

7. More broadly, the United Nations system has continued its efforts to provide resources to support the implementation of the Framework. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has provided multifaceted support to several African Union-led initiatives and activities, including the annual high-level dialogue on democracy, human rights and governance in Africa and the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa. UNDP has also supported African Union efforts to strengthen its mechanisms and structures, in particular the African Peer Review Mechanism, through the formulation and validation of the strategic plan of the Mechanism for the period 2016–2020, and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and its governing bodies, through the provision of a senior economist and policy support.

8. The United Nations system and the African Union have continued to work together to advance their common priority of achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. In June 2017, UN-Women, the African Union Commission and the Government of Germany launched the African Women Leaders Network, which is to serve as a platform for enhancing the leadership of women in the transformation of Africa, with a focus on governance, peace and stability. At the summit of the African Union held in Nouakchott in 2018, the Network launched the African Women Leaders Fund to support women-led initiatives and entrepreneurs across the continent. The United Nations, under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General, in conjunction with the African Union, conducted two joint high-level missions to Africa, in July 2017 and July 2018, that were focused on women in peace, security and development. Both missions were followed by joint briefings to the Security Council.

9. The work of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa have contributed to enhanced support, synergy, coordination and coherence among stakeholders in respect of African priorities. The Mechanism has played a key supporting role in recent African Union achievements such as the adoption of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment and its draft implementation road map in January 2018; the launch of the Single African Air Transport Market in January 2018; and the signing of an agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area in March 2018. The Mechanism has also supported African Union initiatives to finance its own programmes, in particular the institution of 0.2 per cent levy on goods imported from outside the continent. The nineteenth session of the Mechanism, held in Addis Ababa on 12 and 13 May 2018, was an opportunity to engage in strategic discussions on ways to support the African Union in its fight against corruption.

10. ECA, as the secretariat of the Mechanism, has also collaborated with the African Development Bank and the African Union Commission to advance sectoral blueprints

for the African Union such as the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, the Africa Mining Vision and the Action Plan for Accelerated Industrial Development in Africa, among others.

11. With regard to peace and security priorities, the United Nations and the African Union have intensified their cooperation, as reflected in my annual reports to the Security Council on strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, including the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union (S/2016/780, S/2017/744 and S/2018/678).

12. Improving social conditions is an important component of our cooperation within the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017–2027. In one example, following the adoption of the African Union Road Map on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth, in January 2017, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) provided technical support to 41 States members of the African Union in the implementation of the Road Map. UNFPA has provided similar support in the revision of key policy documents on sexual and reproductive rights, namely the Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalization of the Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights 2016–2030, and the Africa Health Strategy 2016–2030. The African Union campaign to end child marriage has also received technical and financial support from UNFPA.

13. The United Nations has continued to support the efforts of the African Union with regard to human rights. On 24 April 2018, at the headquarters of the African Union, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights co-chaired the first African Union-United Nations high-level dialogue on human rights, at which agreement was reached on, inter alia, cooperation to establish a human rights compliance framework for African Union peace support operations and a joint African Union-United Nations framework on human rights and accountability.

Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

14. The United Nations has continued to cooperate with the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization on issues of mutual interest, including through the regular engagement of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs. The Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization has continued to participate in the meetings of the Sixth Committee held in October during International Law Week, when legal advisers from Member State capitals discuss the work of the International Law Commission, among other things. He also visited Geneva in July 2017 and exchanged views with members of the International Law Commission. The Office of the Permanent Observer for the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization to the United Nations has regularly organized seminars and informal meetings to share views with representatives of the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders on subjects of international law.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations

15. The United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have taken significant steps to formalize institutional cooperation, in particular with the adoption in September 2016 of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast

Asian Nations and the United Nations (2016–2020), and the ASEAN-United Nations Environment and Climate Change Action Plan (2016–2020) in September 2017. While participating in the thirty-first ASEAN summit, held in November 2017 in Manila, I engaged in constructive discussions with leaders from ASEAN member States on regional and international issues and on ways to improve the coordination of our collective actions. During the ninth iteration of the ASEAN-United Nations summit, also held in Manila in November 2017, as well as at a meeting between the United Nations and the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives, held in Jakarta in April 2018, the two organizations reviewed the progress made and agreed on a way forward to achieve closer cooperation.

16. Practical cooperation has been facilitated through the activities of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and other entities of the United Nations system, and by the presence of a United Nations liaison officer to ASEAN in Jakarta. ESCAP has continued to work closely with ASEAN to overcome barriers to economic integration through the facilitation of trade, transport and information and communications infrastructure.

17. Since 2012, the annual ASEAN-United Nations regional dialogues have created further space to share experiences and best practices in addressing our common peace and security challenges. In December 2017, the regional dialogue held in Kuala Lumpur focused on the role of women in the prevention of violent extremism.

18. ASEAN member States have continued to be important partners and major contributors to United Nations peacekeeping activities. The United Nations participated in an ASEAN regional forum workshop on peacekeeping, held in Hanoi on 19 December 2017. During the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus Experts' Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, held in April 2018 in Bali, Indonesia, the United Nations announced the expansion of a triangular partnership project to the ASEAN region, effective late 2018. Initially implemented in Africa, the project provides training to troop-contributing countries in areas such as engineering that are critical to enabling capabilities.

19. The United Nations has continued to support the efforts of ASEAN with respect to disarmament, counter-terrorism, preventing violent extremism and cross-border security issues. In that regard, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism have organized regional workshops and capacity-building activities and helped to coordinate the sharing of experiences and good practices. In September 2017, the Regional Centre organized a workshop to discuss synergies between the region's efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

20. Furthermore, ESCAP, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and UNDP have cooperated closely with the ASEAN secretariat and member States to support their efforts to prevent and address challenges related to climate change and disaster risk reduction, management and recovery, including through the implementation of the ASEAN-United Nations Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management, and the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, which is based on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

21. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has continued its long-standing collaboration with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization across the

entire spectrum of its work in transport. They have also cooperated on trade facilitation, including through technical assistance, capacity-building activities and meetings of experts. ECE has assisted the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization in developing its regional trade facilitation strategy, which is near completion.

22. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has worked closely with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization in developing and implementing plans to strengthen the agrifood trade, following a letter of agreement signed in December 2017. They have also worked to establish a regional cooperation centre for sustainable food systems, as proposed in a joint declaration by the Ministers of Agriculture of States members of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, which was adopted at their meeting in May 2017 in Istanbul, Turkey.

23. The United Nations has also reinforced its engagement with the secretariat of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization and its member States with respect to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including through intergovernmental mechanisms such as the regional forum on sustainable development and the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

Caribbean Community

24. In May 2018, I attended the opening of the thirty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in Havana, which provided an opportunity to engage in constructive discussions with ministers and other senior officials from the secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and member States. Prior to that, representatives of the United Nations system and CARICOM held their ninth general meeting, at United Nations Headquarters in July 2017. Subsequently, in June 2018, the Secretary-General of CARICOM participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations.

25. Following a request from the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, the United Nations provided advisory and technical assistance for the design and development of the CARICOM counter-terrorism strategy that was adopted in February 2018. Similarly, UNDP has been providing similar guidance and technical support for the review of the CARICOM crime and security strategy. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean has been providing legal and policy assistance to States in the Caribbean in the implementation of international instruments relating to conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction. In December 2016, the Regional Centre partnered with the Implementation Agency in organizing the first Caribbean regional encounter on forensic ballistics, in Port of Spain.

26. Other areas of cooperation include climate change, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. My visit to Antigua and Barbuda and Dominica in October 2017 provided an opportunity to witness the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the Caribbean. UNDP and CARICOM convened a high-level pledging conference in November 2017 at United Nations Headquarters aimed at mobilizing international financing and technical support for reconstruction and building resilience in affected countries. Over $1.3 billion in pledges and over $1 billion in loans and debt relief were secured on that occasion. As a follow-up to the conference, UNDP, in partnership with the CARICOM secretariat, has been developing a regional resilience framework that will help to facilitate the integration of public and private sector initiatives to support the vision of CARICOM leaders to make the Caribbean the first climate resilient region in the world. The World Food Programme (WFP) and

the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction have worked closely with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency in the implementation of its Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy and Programming Framework (2014–2024), including through capacity-building activities and developing the national disaster risk reduction capacities of member States in line with the Sendai Framework. FAO has also supported CARICOM in the implementation of its regional food and nutrition strategy.

Central European Initiative

27. The Economic Commission for Europe has worked closely with the Central European Initiative on advanced biofuels in the context of a bio-based economy, with the support of the Central European Initiative Cooperation Fund and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission.

28. Furthermore, UNDP and the Central European Initiative collaborated through regular information exchanges from 2016 to 2017 on projects that focused on the resilience of municipalities with respect to migration.

Collective Security Treaty Organization

29. The United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization have engaged in regular information exchanges, visits, participation in conferences and training exercises. In May 2017 and January 2018, staff of the Department of Political Affairs held consultations in Moscow with their counterparts in the secretariat of the Collective Security Treaty Organization to discuss issues related to conflict prevention and resolution and opportunities to enhance cooperation. Subsequently, in June 2018, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, represented by its Deputy Secretary-General, participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations.

30. My Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia has maintained contact with the Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization to discuss and coordinate preventive efforts in Central Asia. The United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization have also regularly interacted to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia, including through capacity-building workshops.

31. Peacekeeping is another important area of cooperation. A visit to Moscow by the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support in July 2017 provided an opportunity to discuss ways to deepen that cooperation. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has engaged with the Collective Security Treaty Organization on training opportunities, following a request made by the Collective Security Treaty Organization after its participation in a workshop for chiefs of police held at United Nations Headquarters in June 2016.

32. Meanwhile, UNODC has cooperated with the Collective Security Treaty Organization within the "Networking the Networks" initiative to promote operational cooperation between regional and international law enforcement organizations to facilitate the exchange of criminal intelligence and to support multilateral operations targeting all forms of organized crime, including drug trafficking.

Commonwealth of Independent States

33. During consultations held in Moscow in May 2017 and January 2018, the Department of Political Affairs engaged in constructive discussions with the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including the Executive Secretary, on peace and security issues in the Eurasian region and opportunities for further cooperation and coordination. In June 2018, the Deputy Executive Secretary of CIS participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations.

34. My Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia has maintained regular contact with the Executive Secretary of CIS to exchange views and coordinate preventive efforts in Central Asia. The United Nations and CIS have also cooperated through regional workshops and projects in support of the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia.

35. Furthermore, UNODC has cooperated with CIS under the framework of the protocol signed in July 2005 with the Executive Committee of CIS on the exchange of information and cooperation in areas related to drug control, crime prevention and international terrorism in the context of sustainable development and human security.

Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries

36. The United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries have continued to work closely to support efforts to resolve the political crisis and sustain peace in Guinea-Bissau. My Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau has maintained regular contact with the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and other multilateral partners to ensure the mobilization, harmonization and coordination of international assistance to Guinea-Bissau.

37. In addition, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has cooperated with the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, mainly in the areas of natural, social and human sciences, including through research, joint activities and the development of tools for teachers. In March 2018, during the eighth World Water Forum in Brasilia, the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme organized a side event that provided an opportunity to engage with experts from the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture on the need to build bridges and align actions relating to research, education and capacity-building with the 2030 Agenda.

38. The United Nations University (UNU) Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance, a think tank dedicated to electronic governance, as part of its efforts to support the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in the area of digital governance, hosted a technical meeting in June 2017 in Guimarães, Portugal, that focused on the digital agenda of the Community. The Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance has also supported the University of Minho in implementing a project to improve electronic public services in Timor-Leste and in the African States members of the Community.

39. The United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries have further cooperated in strengthening multilingualism and respect for language diversity. Each year, the United Nations hosts a celebration of Portuguese Language

and Culture Day. On 5 May 2018, the Executive Secretary of the Community joined me for the celebration held at United Nations Headquarters.

Council of Europe

40. The United Nations has engaged in regular consultations with the Council of Europe. In May 2017, I visited Strasbourg, France, and met with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe to discuss a broad range of issues, including conflict prevention, migration, combating corruption and counter-terrorism. At the working level, staff of the Department of Political Affairs held talks with their counterparts in the secretariat and other organs of the Council of Europe in October 2017 in Strasbourg.

41. The United Nations and the Council of Europe have also reinforced their cooperation in the areas of human rights and refugee law. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Council of Europe continue to hold annual coordination meetings to share experiences and best practices and to identify areas for closer cooperation. During their tenth coordination meeting, held in Geneva on 13 and 14 June 2018, participants discussed freedom of expression in the digital age and the role of human rights defenders.

42. In addition, the Council of Europe and its organs, especially the European Court of Human Rights, have cooperated with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on asylum cases, including in the joint training of judges, lawyers, asylum decision makers and staff of national non-governmental organizations. In March 2018, with the support of UNHCR, the Council of Europe launched a new phase (2018–2020) of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees, which facilitates the integration of refugees into European societies through education and employment.

43. The Council of Europe remains an important partner in advancing children's rights, in close cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In March 2018, the UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia/Special Coordinator for the Refugee and Migrant Response in Europe visited the headquarters of the Council of Europe to discuss ways to enhance that cooperation, among other things.

44. The Council of Europe continues to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and has signalled its commitment to indicating links, where relevant, between its programme of activities and budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and specific Sustainable Development Goals.

Economic Community of Central African States

45. The United Nations has engaged in regular consultations and held joint activities with the secretariat of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and its member States to address regional peace and security issues, as reflected in my reports to the Security Council on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). That collaboration has included engagement in preventive diplomacy, early warning, mediation and gender mainstreaming activities. The Secretary-General of ECCAS also participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations in June 2018.

46. UNESCO, UNFPA, UNOCA and UN-Women collaborated with ECCAS on youth empowerment and participation in Central Africa. From 30 November to

2 December 2017 in Libreville, the Government of Gabon, ECCAS, UNOCA, the International Organization of la Francophonie and UNESCO jointly organized a Pan-African youth forum for a culture of peace and the fight against radicalization and work towards the creation of an early warning system in Central Africa. Participants adopted a declaration expressing their commitment to fighting radicalization and promoting a culture of peace and made recommendations to member States and multilateral partners.

Economic Cooperation Organization

47. The United Nations Forum on Forests and the secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization jointly organized a meeting of experts in September 2016 at the headquarters of the Economic Cooperation Organization in Tehran to explore ways to enhance the involvement of regional and subregional entities in international arrangement on forests. The United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030, adopted by the General Assembly in April 2017, reflects the participants' main proposals.

48. The United Nations system continues to support the efforts of the Economic Cooperation Organization in respect of disaster risk reduction, with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction supporting the preparation of a regional framework in that regard for the Economic Cooperation Organization that is aligned with the Sendai Framework. In addition, the two entities worked together closely on preparations of the second Subregional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction for Central Asia and South Caucasus, held in June 2018 in Yerevan on the theme "An integrated platform for sustainable development and building resilience".

49. ESCAP has worked closely with the Economic Cooperation Organization on transport connectivity, including through the project "Strengthening Transport Connectivity in Southern and Central Asia", for which ESCAP helped to develop a proposal to extend the Istanbul-Teheran-Islamabad corridor to the Delhi-Kolkata-Dhaka corridor. In February 2018, the secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization participated in a related regional policy dialogue convened by ESCAP in Bangkok.

International Criminal Police Organization

50. The United Nations and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) continue to engage in regular consultations. I met with the Secretary-General of INTERPOL in February 2018 in New York to discuss opportunities to further deepen our cooperation. In June 2018, the Executive Director of UNODC visited INTERPOL headquarters in Lyon, France, and discussed with the Secretary-General the enhancement of cooperation in support of efforts by member States to counter threats related to transnational crime and terrorism.

51. At the operational level, INTERPOL is an important partner in countering terrorism, recovering stolen cultural heritage items and reinforcing the capacity of law enforcement institutions to prevent and counter transnational crimes. For example, since May 2016, UNODC and INTERPOL have worked together closely to build the capacity of States to counter transnational criminal activities and share information with regional counterparts. UNESCO and UNODC participate in the INTERPOL Expert Group on Stolen Cultural Property and have developed joint initiatives with member States, in particular in conflict contexts.

52. INTERPOL has also contributed to the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, including through its membership in the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, and has held joint activities with United Nations entities on the prevention of terrorism, including through the development and delivery of online iearning modules and support for the expansion of the INTERPOL I-24/7 global police communications system in Asia.

International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea

53. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/273 on 12 April 2018, the first-ever resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, created a new framework for further engagement between our two organizations.

54. Various United Nations entities are currently working with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, its subsidiary bodies and its member States on a range of issues. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia engages with the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea in the areas of environmental protection and water resources management, as well as data collection and dissemination and early warning, in line with a memorandum of understanding signed in March 2010. In addition, the two entities cooperate in providing support for the ongoing work of national experts in developing a comprehensive regional water strategy for Central Asia.

55. In September 2016, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA and the United Nations Volunteers, on the basis of a 2012–2016 joint programme, launched a second joint programme, for the period 2016–2019, to build the resilience of communities affected by the Aral Sea disaster, in partnership with regional, national and local stakeholders.

International Organization for Migration

56. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/296, in which it approved the draft Agreement concerning the Relationship between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director General of IOM signed the Agreement on 19 September 2016 during the United Nations summit to address large movements of refugees and migrants. As a result, IOM joined the United Nations system as a related organization. IOM is working closely with other United Nations system entities in implementing the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which reached a critical milestone with the conclusion of intergovernmental negotiations in July 2018 on the draft text of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

57. The above-mentioned cooperation has been reinforced in the field. For example, in a number of peace operations, including in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Somalia, IOM has been a key implementing partner in the areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and community violence reduction.

International Organization of la Francophonie

58. In keeping with efforts to enhance consultation and coordination with the International Organization of la Francophonie (IOF), I met with its Secretary-General in March 2017 and March 2018 in New York to discuss political and security developments in francophone countries and cooperation between the United Nations and IOF. I also met with the Group of Francophone Ambassadors in New York in

March 2018 to discuss multilingualism in the context of ongoing reform efforts at the United Nations. Subsequently, in June 2018, the Secretary-General of IOF participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations.

59. The United Nations and IOF have coordinated preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts in several francophone countries, including the Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon and Guinea, and cooperated on electoral assistance in Benin, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea and Madagascar.

60. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support continue to work closely with IOF to support initiatives aimed at increasing contributions of francophone troops and personnel to peacekeeping. Recent activities include the third senior female police officer command development course, held in Dakar in May 2018, in partnership with the African Union, the Government of Senegal and IOF. In addition, in June 2018, the Department of Field Support, together with the United Nations Coordinator for Multilingualism, partnered with IOF in an outreach exercise to highlight the benefits of multilingualism in the field and career opportunities for Arabic, French and Spanish speakers.

61. The Coordinator for Multilingualism and the network of multilingualism focal points have collaborated with IOF to promote multilingualism throughout the work and operations of the United Nations Secretariat, including through the holding of an interactive discussion on multilingualism on French Language Day at United Nations Headquarters in 2017.

62. The United Nations has also continued cooperation with IOF on youth participation and empowerment, including during the annual Youth Forum of the Economic and Social Council and as part of an initiative to prevent violent extremism through education.

Latin American and Caribbean Economic System

63. The Latin American and Caribbean Economic System and ECLAC signed a framework agreement in October 2017 to reinforce their technical and institutional cooperation mainly in the areas of infrastructure development, transport and logistics services. Pursuant to that agreement, the two entities organized joint seminars to promote regional integration and economic and social development. Enhanced cooperation also continued under the framework of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System cooperated with several United Nations entities to support Member States in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda in the region. The Latin American and Caribbean Economic System is also an important partner in the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in the Americas, including through the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas.

League of Arab States

64. In March 2017, I participated in a summit of the League of Arab States in Amman, where I engaged in constructive discussions with leaders on ways to address common challenges and to enhance our partnership. I was able to continue those discussions with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States during my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations in June 2018. The United Nations and the League of Arab States held their fourteenth general

cooperation meeting in Geneva in July 2018 to review progress made and the way forward for closer cooperation.

65. The United Nations has continued its efforts to open a liaison office to the League of Arab States in Cairo, in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, following the signature of the protocol of amendment of the text of the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and the League of Arab States in September 2016 by the Secretaries-General of both institutions.

66. At the operational level, the United Nations has supported efforts by the League of Arab States to strengthen its capacities in relation to conflict prevention, management, mediation and negotiation and peacekeeping. In January 2018, the League of Arab States invited the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP and the European Union to conduct informal consultations with a view to strengthening its operational capabilities. The League of Arab States has also been an important partner in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

67. The United Nations and the League of Arab States has continued to maintain close contacts with respect to country- and region-specific situations, including in Libya, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, and the question of Palestine. In Libya, for instance, my Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) has worked closely with the League of Arab States and the other members of the Quartet (i.e., the African Union and the European Union) to coordinate efforts in support of the political process. In April 2018, the Quartet met in Cairo to review developments in the overall political and security situation in Libya since their last meeting in September 2017 in New York, and to further coordinate their efforts in that regard.

68. The United Nations and the League of Arab States have also enhanced their cooperation on water-related issues. In October 2017, the organizations and their specialized agencies held their thirteenth sectoral meeting at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo to address the preservation and management of water resources in the Arab region.

69. OHCHR has continued to strengthen its cooperation with the Arab Human Rights Committee, including through consultations, joint activities and the OHCHR fellowship programme for staff of regional human rights mechanisms. In April 2017, OHCHR and the Arab Human Rights Committee organized a consultative meeting in Cairo on an Arab human rights strategy.

70. Similarly, there has been growing cooperation in the area of conflict-related sexual violence, following the signing in March 2016 of a memorandum of understanding between the League of Arab States and the United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Pursuant to that agreement, the League of Arab States, UNDP, UN-Women and the Office hosted a meeting in March 2018 in Cairo to discuss legislative and policy progress and best practices and to identify additional areas for possible reform.

71. The League of Arab States has been an important partner in addressing global refugee and migration challenges. In September 2017, UNHCR and the League of Arab States signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance their cooperation and engage in joint efforts to implement the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. As part of the 10-year campaign to end statelessness, UNHCR and the League of Arab States organized a ministerial conference in Tunis in February 2018 on the theme "Belonging and legal identity" under the patronage of the President of Tunisia.

72. The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations has also worked closely with the League of Arab States, including through support for the Alliance's fellowship

programme and the implementation of the Unified Arab Strategic Plan for Alliance of Civilizations (2016–2019).

Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM

73. In February 2017, the Department of Political Affairs held consultations with the Secretary-General of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM in New York, which focused, inter alia, on ongoing regional integration, democratic strengthening and mediation efforts in the European region, and opportunities for enhancing cooperation between the two organizations in the areas of early warning and conflict prevention.

74. The United Nations has also continued to engage with States members of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development — GUAM and other relevant stakeholders to find sustainable solutions to the crises affecting the region. In July 2017, I travelled to Kyiv to discuss the situation in Ukraine with national authorities.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

75. The United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have engaged in regular consultations to discuss issues related to peace and security. In June 2018, the Secretary-General of OSCE participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations. My Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia has regularly briefed OSCE heads of missions in Central Asia on the situation in the region.

76. The United Nations liaison office to OSCE in Vienna, which represents the Departments of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, contributed to enhanced cooperation on peace and security matters, including with regard to country-specific and regional situations in the South Caucasus (through the Geneva international discussions on Georgia), the western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine. Meanwhile, the United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia have continued to involve OSCE in efforts to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Central Asia.

77. In September 2017, the Department of Field Support and the OSCE secretariat signed letters of understanding establishing formal collaborative arrangements in the areas of procurement, training and geospatial information systems.

Organization of American States

78. The Department of Political Affairs and the secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS) held their eighth "desk-to-desk" meeting in January 2017 at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C., to discuss, inter alia, support for peace and political processes, the rule of law, human rights, democracy and the fight against corruption and impunity. They also explored opportunities to foster trilateral cooperation between OAS, the Caribbean Community and the United Nations. OAS, represented by its Executive Secretary for Integral Development, participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations in June 2018.

79. The United Nations has continued to cooperate with OAS and other stakeholders in Haiti, including through the Port-au-Prince-based Core Group on Haiti, a political coordination mechanism chaired by my Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti.

80. The United Nations and OAS have also reinforced their cooperation in the areas of drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice. The OAS Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission and UNODC have collaborated in exchanging data and analysis and in the development of platforms on justice, crime and narcotics-related issues. On disarmament affairs, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, together with the OAS Inter-American Committee against Terrorism, held a joint regional seminar in Lima in April 2017 on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Organization of Islamic Cooperation

81. The United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have maintained close contacts in relation to country- and region-specific situations, including in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, and the question of Palestine. I met with the Secretary-General of OIC in September 2017 to discuss regional and international developments and ways to enhance our cooperation.

82. At the working level, the United Nations and OIC have improved "desk-to-desk" exchanges and increased mutual participation in meetings. In May 2017, the Department of Political Affairs and OIC held a brainstorming session on the Middle East at OIC headquarters in Jeddah. They also supported the organization of two international conferences on the question of Jerusalem under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in July 2017, in Baku, and in June 2018, in Rabat. Subsequently, the United Nations and OIC held their fourteenth general cooperation meeting in July 2018 in Rabat to review progress made and explore opportunities for enhanced cooperation. Furthermore, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism has established regular engagement with the OIC secretariat in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Office briefed the OIC Permanent Independent Commission on Human Rights in April 2017 and April 2018 on human rights and counter-terrorism issues.

83. At the technical level, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs have worked closely with OIC subsidiary organs, in particular the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries. Cooperation has included the organization of the Arab Conference on a Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics, held in Ankara in April 2017, and a workshop on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework, held in Beirut in April 2017.

84. UNESCO has continued to maintain close cooperation with OIC mainly through the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in line with a framework of agreement signed in June 2012. The UNESCO Rabat office signed an agreement with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in May 2017 to reinforce their collaboration on climate change and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

85. Finally, OIC has supported the work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, including through its fellowship programme and the Global Youth Movement for the Alliance of Civilizations.

Pacific Islands Forum

86. The United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum have reinforced their engagement, including through regular meetings in the margins of the high-level week of the General Assembly and the summits of the Pacific Islands Forum. In addition, the Forum, represented by its Deputy Secretary-General, participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations in June 2018.

87. At the operational level, the United Nations continued to support the efforts of the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat and associated institutions in the implementation of internationally agreed commitments. The Forum secretariat collaborated with different United Nations entities to facilitate the holding of a regional preparatory meeting for Pacific small island developing States in Nuku'Alofa in June 2018. The meeting reviewed progress made in the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, in preparation for the high-level review of the Pathway to be held in New York in September 2019. ESCAP and UNDP, along with the Forum secretariat, have played key roles in the regional Sustainable Development Goals task force, which developed a road map for sustainable development in the Pacific that was endorsed by leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in 2017.

88. ESCAP, the International Labour Organization, OHCHR, UNDP and UN-Women are active members of the gender working group of the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific, which supports the implementation of and reporting on the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration. UN-Women, ESCAP and the Forum secretariat have collaborated in support of gender-responsive budgeting in the Pacific and supported regional efforts to promote women's participation and empowerment, including through the "practice parliament" initiative, which is designed to promote women's political participation throughout the Pacific through skills-building activities.

89. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific has worked closely with the Pacific Islands Forum to promote the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments. The Centre also held a Pacific regional capacity-building workshop in Apia in September 2016 to foster dialogue on the requirements of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization

90. In June 2017, I attended the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Astana and engaged in constructive discussions with leaders on issues related to peace and security, while the Deputy Secretary-General represented the United Nations at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit held in 2018. In addition, my Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia has maintained regular contacts with the leadership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on political and security developments in the region. The Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization participated in my high-level interactive dialogue with heads of regional and other organizations in June 2018.

91. At the operational level, the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization have strengthened their cooperation in the areas of counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism that is conducive to terrorism. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and the Office of Counter-Terrorism have worked with the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, including through expert meetings and regional

workshops, to promote the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

92. UNODC has enhanced its cooperation with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization through regular meetings and mutual participation of experts in regional trainings and workshops. In March 2018, UNODC and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization organized a high-level side event at the sixty-first session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in Vienna, to discuss efforts to combat illicit narcotic drugs and to explore opportunities for closer cooperation in that regard. Other areas of cooperation have included the prevention and combating of cybercrime, including through the open-ended intergovernmental expert group on cybercrime, where the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an observer.

93. ESCAP has provided financial and technical support for the formulation of an intergovernmental agreement among member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on the facilitation of international road transport, which entered into force on 20 January 2017. Subsequently, the two entities have conducted joint activities to support the implementation of that agreement and to facilitate regional economic cooperation and integration.

94. In 2018, UNESCO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization signed a memorandum of understanding to provide a framework for cooperation with specific attention to General Assembly resolution 67/104 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace. Cooperation will be developed in the areas of education, science, culture, communications and information with a view to strengthening peace, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue.

III. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; and Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

95. The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs has been working with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization to promote disarmament and non-proliferation education, with a particular emphasis on empowering women.

96. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is a member of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and co-chairs its Working Group on Preventing and Responding to Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorist Attacks. Within the Working Group, the two entities continue to implement a global project to ensure the effective coordination of operations and communications in the event of chemical and biological attacks.

IV. Observations and recommendations

97. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations has deepened and diversified over the reporting period at the strategic, policy and operational levels. Our organizations are themselves diverse, with different mandates and memberships. Yet our substantive agendas increasingly converge in key areas of peace and security, sustainable development, humanitarian action, human rights and

the rule of law. Furthermore, we share a deep commitment to effective and rules-based multilateralism.

98. Regional and other organizations play a key role in preventive diplomacy, confidence-building and mediation, preventing violent extremism, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and long-term development. We must, therefore, focus on increased engagement with those entities towards sustaining peace, including through regular consultation, enhanced information-sharing, improved coordination and joint approaches and activities.

99. As I observed in the introduction to the present report, the challenges we face are complex, multidimensional, interconnected and have a high level of unpredictability. In seeking to tackle them, we must address their drivers as well, including lack of economic opportunities, marginalization, exclusion and discrimination. We must also empower women and girls, as well as harness the imagination of youth in creating stable and resilient societies. Alternative livelihoods, respect for human rights and solutions to poverty and human insecurity must be part of the answer, and the 2030 Agenda provides a guiding framework in that regard.

100. To further strengthen working relations between the United Nations and regional partners, we need to prioritize more effective cooperation and practical collaboration. At the strategic level, while we have done much to enhance coordination between us, we can further leverage our comparative advantages and improve our systems for consultation, especially where a number of organizations are working in the same area or on the same issue. We should also continue to build up and expand our bilateral, and in some cases trilateral, cooperation mechanisms, which are the backbone of much of what we can accomplish together in the field. Across the board, we must uphold the fundamental principles of cooperation: trust and good communication.

101. In the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, there is a need in the modern era for the United Nations and regional and other organizations to continue to work towards more effective, "network" multilateralism. Only by working together can we enhance our capacities to prevent and resolve conflicts and other crises that threaten humanity, to uphold human rights and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the interest of the peoples we collectively serve.